Van Buren District Library Board

September 22, 2026

Webster Memorial Library

Minutes

Chairperson Rendell called the regular Board meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. at the Webster Memorial Library.

Present: Sandy Hanson, Betty Markel, Denise Campagna, Wayne Rendell, David Vliek, Pam Dickerson, Bruce Cutting; Tracy Smola, Administrator Coordinator; Chantelle Dowling Operations Manager

Absent: No One

The board was introduced to new hires Dani Winchester and Hilari Sabo, who recently joined the VBDL staff.

Wayne read a statement from Mike Blum, the Library's Labor attorney regarding inquiries about the recent personnel change: "I would like to clarify the situation involving Dan Hutchins. At the special meeting held on September 15, the board extended Mr. Hutchins' leave of absence to October 15, 2026. Since this is an on-going personnel matter, nothing further can be said about it at this time.

It was moved to approve the agenda as mailed (Motion: Vliek; Second Campagna; Motion: Carried).

It was moved to approve the minutes of the August 25, 2026 and the Special Board Meeting on September 15, 2026 Board meeting, as mailed. (Motion: Markel; Second: Hanson; Motion: Carried).

It was moved to approve for payment the September "Due to" vouchers number 26-09-01 through 26-09-04 in the amount of $10,429.13; and General Fund vouchers numbers 26-09-02 through 26-09-61 in the total amount of $308,197.00. (Motion: Hanson; Second: Vliek; Motion: Carried).

Public Comment:
No one

Reports:

A. **Financial Update**
Revenue and expenditures remain consistent with the expected year-to-date percentages. Chantelle and Tracy have been directed to begin work on the budget amendments scheduled for approval in November.

B. Employee Changes

The board was updated on new staff: Emily Wagner, who started at the Bangor location on September 2; Kei Miyazaki, at the Bloomingdale location on August 31; and Mallory Newell, who began work at the Webster location on September 1. Mallory's employment is done through a Work Study program through Decatur Public Schools.

Unfinished Business :

A. Geneva Township Mailing

The postcards have been printed, with both versions run together to minimize printing expenses. The first postcard was mailed on or around September 15, and the second is scheduled for mailing in October. Copies of both postcards have been provided to Geneva Township.

B. Furniture Update

Webster's staff furniture installation is complete except for one item awaiting replacement hardware. Bangor has received the new community room chairs and tables. A portion of Covert's furniture will be picked up for reupholstering; once that grouping is finished, it will be returned and the second group will be taken for completion. We are also awaiting delivery of items for the Gobles and Bloomingdale branches.

C. Health Care Update

Chantelle provided an update regarding the possibility of extending the Library's group health and dental insurance plans to eligible staff at the employee's expense. Under the current Blue Cross guidelines, employees working a minimum of 17.5 hours per week would be eligible to participate. The Board discussed the potential benefits and considerations of offering this option and directed Chantelle to distribute an interest survey to eligible staff to gauge participation. The survey results will be used to assist the Board in determining next steps.

New Business :

A. Search for new Director

A proposal from Mortimore Consulting LLC was

presented to assist with the search for the new director. The Board will form a search committee to work directly with Brian throughout the process. It was moved to sign the proposal with Mortimore Consulting LLC for the search for the new director. (Motion: Markel; Second: Dickerson; Voting "yes" – Campagna, Rendell, Dickerson, Hanson, Vliek, Markel, Cutting; Voting "no" – no one; Motion: Carried).

It was moved to establish a search committee of up to five or six individuals to work with Mortimore Consulting LLC throughout the director search process. (Motion: Rendell; Second: Cutting; Motion: Carried).

B. Branch Meeting

The Board will hold a Branch Meeting on October 15 with Brian Mortimore present to give staff a clearer picture of the Board's direction in the director search and to discuss the staff culture at VBDL. Board members Rendell, Campagna, and Vliek will be in attendance.

C. Computer Purchase

It was moved to approve the purchase of new computers in alignment with the 2026 capital improvement plan. (Motion: Campagna; Second: Markel; Voting "yes" – Cutting, Markel, Vliek, Hanson, Dickerson, Rendell, Campagna; Voting "no" – no one; Motion: Carried).

Public Comment:

Kris Locke, Antwerp Friends President
Kaileigh Saucedo, Antwerp
Milan Harden, Covert
Christina Leftwich, Bloomingdale

It was moved to change the October board meeting to October 27, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. at the Webster Memorial Library: (Motion: Markel; Second: Dickerson; Motion: Carried).

It was moved to adjourn at 5:41 p.m. (Motion: Hanson; Second: Cutting; Motion: Carried).

Respectfully Submitted,

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Chairman Secretary

Recorded by Tracy Smola